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Column One BY David Courtney

A GOOD deal of nonsense, a great deal of supposition, and some sense, are written and said about the Middle East. The sense is not confined to Israel and the nonsense is not exclusive to Moscow, which, however, has just informed a bemused world that Israel has signed a willingness to give Great Britain bases in the Negev to take the place of the disputed bases in the Suez Canal Zone. The idea that Britain could set up her Middle East bases on Negev soil looks reasonable enough on the map but a trifle fantastic when the evidence of politics, the absence of adequate water supply, the cost of turning Eilat or even Akaba into a decent-size harbor, and the presence at the gateway to the gulf of an Egyptian gun battery that would not necessarily become friendly once the British bases were transferred from Suez to Israel.

ONE day, of course, this may change. One day there may be peace between Israel and Jordan. One day the Egyptians may cease to harry Israel-bound ships. One day Eilat may rival Middle East and the waters of the Negev flow abundantly. But that day is a long way off, like the day, foreboded recently by Mr. Horre-Belinas, when someone will have money and vigor and time enough to build a canal from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea and ships will gladly pay the exorbitant dues of a lock-canal waterway if for no better reason than to annoy the Egyptians.

THE Negev as a British base, and a Negev canal as an alternative to the Suez, are not enough as visions but seem to have very little relation to immediate probabilities. As ideas they are not particularly new and their rebirth just now is, perhaps, an indication of the muddled thinking which exists on the subject of the Middle East. The idea of a canal, of which early travelers in Arabia wrote feelingly, and the tales told long ago by Robinson Crusoe, are areas in this practical, realistic and oil-drilling century. A psycho-analyst might, indeed, trace much of the Arab fantasy to the Middle East, and even much that is performed, to the effects of these and similar diverting influences from remote Arabia.

IN the circumstances it should surprise no one to discover that even the Middle Eastern policies of the great Powers fall between realism and fantasy. For it is sometimes hard to tell the difference between the real and the imaginary. The way western notions of Arabia have been propagated among the Arabs themselves, and among them, including certain of their rulers, have come to believe themselves and their destiny to be shaped in the manner of a fantasy. This, in turn, has led to a grand day when Damascus will become a Grand Central Station and the goat-hair tents of the past replaced by semi-detached villas.

THERE is, however, a reality amid the fantasy. It is not necessarily, or only, the reality of backwardness that so many people in this country are apt to think. It is the reality of disunity. For if there are many Arabs who take themselves at the face value drawn and painted for them by Western admirers, there are many others who know the facts more for what it is and are tired of being fooled instead of fed. This new and genuine "realism" was represented for a brief while, by General Nagib, who disappointed his people and some of us. The fact remains that he was symptomatic of a broad and profound dissatisfaction, which is itself the first step to progress. The intelligent Arab is beginning to suspect the worth of his own "picturesqueness" and therefore the sincerity of those who wish him to progress. It may be nearer to riding himself of the element of Arabian fantasy than his western sponsors are.

Eugen Eugenides
The death is reported in Switzerland on Thursday of Mr. Eugen Eugenides, a former Greek Consul General and Homeward T. He Manager of Svenska Orient Lines.
Mr. Eugenides was instrumental in introducing citrus fruit to the Scandinavian market.

West Forces Showdown On China on Eve of Conference

GENEVA, Sunday. — The Western Powers will force a showdown with the Russians over the status of People's China before the conference on Korea and Indo-China is scheduled to open tomorrow afternoon, an authoritative Western source said here today. The conference is to take place at the Palace of Nations, the former League of Nations Headquarters. Nineteen nations including those that fought under the UN flag in Korea are to take part in the first phase of the talks which will deal with Korea, but if the Soviets demand that the Chinese People's Republic must rate equal with the Big Powers, the opening may well be postponed.

Both sides have adopted rigid positions. The Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. V.M. Molotov, said on his arrival here yesterday that the conference would be a meeting of the "Big Five" Powers. At the same time an official note reiterating the Soviet stand on this issue was handed to the Western Embassies in Moscow.

The Eastern Meeting. The Soviet, Chinese, and North Korean Foreign Ministers conferred here for more than an hour today at Mr. Molotov's residence. The Soviet bloc delegates have studied the Indian Mr. Horre-Belinas, when someone will have money and vigor and time enough to build a canal from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea and ships will gladly pay the exorbitant dues of a lock-canal waterway if for no better reason than to annoy the Egyptians.

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Mr. Dulles told reporters last night that he had come to Geneva on Paris to make necessary by the Communist aggression in Asia. He hoped that the Communists had come to Geneva to purge themselves of their aggressions and that it would thus be possible to restore peace and unity to the East. Mr. Dulles arrived here by air tonight. Mr. Eden attended the Geneva Conference, presided over by Sir Winston Churchill just before his departure. He had flown back to Britain to attend to the minute consultations with the Prime Minister, particularly on Indo-China.

When his plane stopped briefly at Paris airport the French President, Mr. Rene Coty, had a short discussion with the French Foreign Minister, Mr. Robert Schuman, who is not expected to arrive in Geneva until tomorrow morning.

Before his departure Mr. Dulles is expected to sign the Franco-Vietnam treaty, an effort to strengthen his Government's position prior to the talks.

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Gov't Reaffirms Opposition To Pay Increases

The Government, at its weekly Cabinet meeting in Jerusalem yesterday, reaffirmed its decision not to permit any salary and wage increases during the present fiscal year, according to the Government spokesman.

The Cabinet considering a letter from the Medical Association requesting negotiations on the salaries of doctors' pay raised demand delayed a decision on this request until next week.

The resolution not to grant wage increases is doubly significant in that it comes simultaneously with the Ministerial Economic Committee's resolve to continue the credit freeze for another three months as an anti-inflationary measure.

The "Hebrew Language Campaign" plan was approved by the Cabinet yesterday. The plan to create groups of volunteer teachers throughout the country to teach basic Hebrew, local geography and civics to immigrants, is to be executed with the cooperation of local councils, youth movements and educational and labor groups. The Minister of Education and Culture, Professor Ben-Zion, is to set the date for the launching of the campaign.

A treaty with the Greek Government permitting reciprocal civil air privileges at the Greek and Israeli airports was ratified, said the International Convention on the Political Rights of Women.

The Convention, signed by 21 countries (but by none of Israel's neighbors), guarantees to women the right to vote, be elected and hold public office on a basis of equality with men. Since this is provided for in Israel's Declaration of Independence, it does not require Knesset approval.

The Minister of Posts, Dr. J. Burg, and the Minister of Development, Dr. Dov Joseph, reported on their recent missions abroad on behalf of the Development Bond Issue. Both Ministers had been asked for the scrapping of Mount Zion, near the traditional tomb of David.

Footprints of four men were discovered yesterday morning on the roof of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health, found a hole about half-a-meter wide in the center of the floor of one of the rooms.

The Prime Minister reported on the discussions in the Security Council.

The request of the physicians' association for a 10% increase in their salaries was rejected by the Cabinet. The Minister of Finance, Dr. Levi Eshkol, said the Government would not consider the request.

Iraq to Get U.S. Arms Aid With 'No Strings Attached'

Baghdad Report Withholds Details

BAGHDAD, Sunday. — Iraq announced today that the U.S. had agreed to provide her with military aid with no political strings attached. A communique issued by the Directorate-General of the Propaganda Ministry, Baghdad, said that the decision to extend U.S. military aid to the Iraqi army was in answer to a request submitted to America last year.

The Iraqi government, desirous of the expansion and strengthening of its army, asked for military aid from the U.S. in March last year. The communique said, "After continued contacts we are now glad to announce that the U.S. Government has approved the supply to the Iraqi army of military aid unconditionally, and without political or alliance commitments attached."

The communique gave no details on the amount or what type of weapons would be sent. Reports from Washington say that Arab diplomats were not surprised by the U.S. decision. Secret talks and negotiations had been going on for a long time.

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More Economic Aid Seen for Turkey

NEW YORK, Sunday (UP). — Authoritative sources disclosed last night that the U.S. had agreed to increase economic aid to Turkey by \$30m, bringing the years total to \$70m.

The increase was reported to have been a result of talks conducted in the U.S. by the Turkish President, Mr. Celal Bayar.

Dawalibi Stays Home To Discuss Israel

The Syrian Defense Minister, Marouf Dawalibi, postponed his visit to Cairo at the last moment, owing to the "extremely dangerous situation" along the Israel-Syria military line, NEABS reported. (Yesterday, Reuters erroneously reported Dawalibi's arrival in the Egyptian capital).

The Syrian Cabinet yesterday held two emergency sessions under the chairmanship of President Hashem al Attar to discuss allegations of Israeli troop concentrations and the construction of fortifications along the border.

Freezing of Bank Credit Extended

Bank credit is to remain frozen at its November limits for another three months, it was decided at last night's meeting of the Economic Ministers' Committee in the capital.

The decision extends the Committee's previous decision, which took effect on February 1, until the end of July, and is considered to be an anti-inflationary move. Official circles have prophesied the adoption of regulations giving strict definitions of bank credit.

Supreme Soviet Resumes Sessions Today

MOSCOW, Sunday (Reuters). — The Supreme Soviet adjourned last night until tomorrow after three days of sessions describing Soviet economic achievements.

When the Supreme Soviet resumed its sessions today, it will be the first time since the 1947 Deputies did not know whether Prime Minister Georgi Malenkov would address them. It is expected Mr. Malenkov will appear before a joint session of the two chambers of the Supreme Soviet and, with a combined mood, he will not yet been scheduled.

Argentine Plane Vanishes With 25 LA RIOJA, Argentina, Sunday (UP). — Search planes returned here from their second day of reconnaissance today and reported no sign of an Argentine Airlines DC4 missing since Friday night with 21 passengers and four crew members aboard.

San Juan, Argentina, late Friday on route to Buenos Aires and has not been heard from since.

Envoy Says Asia Fears Colonialism Most

ARLINGTON, Calif., Sunday (Reuters). — Mr. James Barrington, Burmese Ambassador to the U.S., told the annual conference of the World Affairs Council here last night that the Asiatic countries wanted no part of the U.S. crusade against Communism and would not join in it.

He said that he was expressing Asiatic public opinion and not necessarily the views of his government.

Australians' Visas Held Up

MOSCOW, Sunday. — The Australian Embassy staff in Moscow, ordered to leave the Soviet Union, were unable to depart because their exit visas had failed to arrive.

In Canberra, meanwhile, the Australian Government categorically rejected the Soviet protest in connection with the flight of the Third Secretary of the Soviet Embassy, Mr. Petrov, and his wife.

Public Interest Dips In McCarthy Dispute

WASHINGTON, Sunday (UP). — The hearings of the Senate investigating sub-committee on the dispute between Senator McCarthy and the Army will be resumed tomorrow afternoon. The main point to be resolved is the legal question of the admissibility, as evidence, of transcripts of the crucial conversations between the Senator and Army Secretary Robert Stevens.

Vast US Anti-Polio Test Begins Today

WASHINGTON, Sunday (UP). — The National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis today proved a vast, nation-wide test on one million children of the Salk vaccine that may prevent polio.

The first inoculations of the \$7,000,000 test will be given in Fairfax County, Virginia, tomorrow morning. Before the week is out about 60 counties in 28 states will also take part in the test.

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The Independence Day Ball
of the Jerusalem Journalists
will be held on Wednesday, May 4, 1954, at the President Hotel
Programme:
Amateur Artists Contest • Fashion Show • Lottery • Two Bands
by Revell, Jerusalem Dancing until morning hours.
Invitations may be obtained at the Secretariat of the Journalists' Association, Tel. 9743.

BRITISH LEGION
TEL AVIV BRANCH
NOTICE
THE MEMBERS' DANCE
which was to be held tomorrow, April 27, 1954
HAS BEEN POSTPONED
for technical reasons.
Members will be advised of the new date.

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Swamps and sand surrounded the large neglected Haifa Bay area, a short three decades ago. Today more than 50,000 Israelis or aged in productive occupation and professions are employed in the country's continued growth and development, a development of the far-sighted RAYTHEON LAND CORPORATION.

